

STATEWIDE PROGRAM STANDING COMMITTEE
FOR ADULT MENTAL HEALTH

Meeting Notes
September 11, 2006

MEMBERS: Kitty Gallagher, George Karabakakis, David Mitchell, Clare Munat, Marty Roberts, and Jim Walsh

DMH STAFF: Wendy Beininger, Jennifer Eads, Melinda Murtaugh, Terry Rowe, and Frank Reed

OTHERS: Richard Allen, Nick Emlen, and Scott Thompson

Facilitation

Marty Roberts facilitated today's meeting except for the discussion of Washington County Mental Health's re-designation, from which she recused herself.

Notes for Past Meetings

The notes for the meeting of July 31 were approved as written. For the notes for the June 12 meeting this year, Standing Committee members are asked to review them before the meeting on October 2 and be prepared to act on the June 12 notes at that time.

Vermont State Hospital (VSH) Updates: Terry Rowe

Terry distributed copies of a suggested draft format for the Standing Committee's annual report to the VSH Governing Body as required by the Governing Body's Bylaws. This will be the first such report that the Standing Committee has done. The sections of the report will encompass observations on:

- ∞ Key VSH Management
- ∞ VSH Grievances, Appeals, and Resolution
- ∞ VSH Quality of Care
- ∞ VSH Policies

Terry offered to bring additional information about these topics to future meetings. The Standing Committee can decide on the timeframe for getting the report done since this would be the committee's first report, Frank said in response to a question about it.

The VSH Policy Committee meets on the second Monday of the month at 10:00 a.m. Scott Thompson said that he would be interested in attending these meetings.

VSH will soon be convening a panel to assist in the hiring process for a patient representative in the next few weeks. The position is fifteen hours per week, \$12.00 an hour. Both Richard Allen

and Scott said that they would be interested in applying for the position. David Mitchell suggested sending the job announcement out to Standing Committee members when it is ready for distribution.

VSH Focus Forum: Kitty Gallagher

Quite a few VSH patients are coming to the focus forum these days, Kitty said. Some of the issues that have been raised are delays in getting money and problems with staff (especially on Brooks 2) and staff-patient interactions. Kitty recommended more training for staff. Terry was familiar with the situation that Kitty described and thought it would be helpful to do a presentation for the Standing Committee on the way that the State Hospital is addressing and categorizing grievances. Terry also already knew about the money delays and, in that grievance, VSH took the patient's side.

Department of Justice (DOJ) Settlement: Wendy Beininger

Wendy distributed a summary of the most important terms of the agreement reached between VSH and DOJ in July. She emphasized that this represents a voluntary effort on the part of Vermont to meet the DOJ's concerns that were raised in the course of the investigation that began two years ago under the Civil Rights of Institutionalized Persons Act (CRIPA). The agreement runs for four years, Wendy said. Theoretically it could end sooner, she added, but she does not know of any such agreement that has ended before the expiration of the four-year term. VSH and DOJ each chose a psychiatrist to work with DOJ attorneys to monitor progress under the agreement. VSH's clinical monitor is Dr. Jeffrey Geller, who has a national reputation for integrated treatment planning. DOJ's is Dr. Mohamed El-Saabawi. Their next scheduled visit will be in October, and they will plan to visit about every six months thereafter.

Membership Report: Marty Roberts

Several people have expressed interest in being on the Standing Committee, Marty said, but not all of them have been able to attend meetings so far. She went over the membership process again, mentioning that interested adults are asked to attend a couple of meetings before they actually apply for membership. Richard Allen said that he would be interested in filling out an application now; Melinda Murtaugh will send him the form.

Statewide Meeting of Program Standing Committees: Nick Emlen

The Vermont Council for Developmental and Mental Health Services is sponsoring another statewide meeting of the program standing committees (both local and statewide), advocates, community members, Community Rehabilitation and Treatment Directors, legislators, and the Division of Mental Health. It will be on Friday, October 20, from 11:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. The meeting place will be the Central Vermont Chamber of Commerce offices in Berlin. The purpose of the meeting will be to review progress on the Futures Plan and to collect comments and recommendations on moving the plan forward. An agenda will be distributed later this month. In the meantime, call Nick Emlen at 223-1773 with any questions you may have.

Volunteers for Program Review Site Visit to Rutland Mental Health Services

Clare Munat and Jim Walsh will go on the site visit to Rutland. Tentative dates for the visit are November 1 and 2. Ron Clark will send out a schedule when one is available.

Search for Deputy Commissioner: Marty Roberts

Marty is one of the members of a committee that will review applicants' qualifications for the position that Paul Blake held until September 1. The full committee has nineteen members and is broadly representative of consumers, families, providers, advocates, and other stakeholders in mental health in Vermont. The committee will meet for the first time this Friday—that is, September 15.

Marty told Standing Committee members that she is concerned at the lack of any recovery-oriented content in the criteria that have been put together for evaluating these applications. Other Standing Committee members listed other concerns:

- ✳ A need for someone who knows the mental-health system and stakeholders at all levels
- ✳ Inclusiveness, again at all levels
- ✳ The complexity added to the whole process by the current possibility that the Department of Mental Health will be reconstituted and the position for a Deputy Commissioner will become a position for a Commissioner

Re-designation of Washington County Mental Health Services (WCMHS)

Marty recused herself from facilitation for this portion of the Standing Committee meeting; Clare facilitated this discussion. A number of issues arose during the ensuing discussion:

- ✓ Documentation in regard to crisis plans and durable powers of attorney for health care (DPOAs)
- ✓ Documentation of physical health care (for example, names of primary care physicians and other information on general health assessments)
- ✓ The effect that the Medical Home Project has had on documentation of physical health care in clients' clinical records (it is important to note here that WCMHS has continued the initiative even though supplemental funding from the state has been discontinued)
- ✓ Possible need for additional training for WCMHS staff

Standing Committee members want additional information on these issues before making their recommendation on WCMHS's re-designation. Melinda will gather it and send it to them before the October 2 meeting. Also, Paul Dupre, WCMHS Chief Executive Officer, and Michael Hartman, Director of Community Rehabilitation and Treatment (CRT), will be invited to the next Standing Committee meeting.

George Karabakakis noted the lack of information about WCMHS's Peer Education Program and other good projects going on in Washington County.

Questions About the VSH Governing Body

- (1) Who is on the Governing Body? The Deputy Commissioner of Health for Mental Health Services presides. Other members include the Secretary of the Agency of Human Services, the Commissioner of the Vermont Department of Health, and three Governor-appointed at-large positions, two of which are currently vacant.
- (2) What happens to the Governing Body when the Futures Plan has been fully implemented? An answer to this question has not been fully explored yet.
- (3) What does the Governing Body do? It approves policies, credentials medical staff of the State Hospital, and also has responsibility for the financial management of the hospital.
- (4) What about interactions between the Governing Body and the Statewide Program Standing Committee? Members discussed sending someone from the Standing Committee to the next Governing Body meeting, which will be on September 20, as well as inviting someone from the Governing Body to come to the October 2 meeting of the Standing Committee. Marty volunteered to invite Butch Alexander, from Lamoille County Mental Health Services.

Policy Review: New Search Policy at VSH

Marty opined that the revised policy on strip searches and body cavity searches is good overall. Standing Committee members had several suggestions for definitions, clarifications, and the like, and turned over responsibilities for formulating their input for the Governing Body to David Mitchell and Jim Walsh. (See memorandum from David and Jim at the end of these notes.)

Recovery Report: Marty Roberts

Marty covered numerous topics in her much-delayed recovery report:

- ⌘ A visit from Paolo Del Vecchio, from the Center for Mental Health Services, to Vermont for the annual meeting of Vermont Psychiatric Survivors this past weekend
- ⌘ The National Consensus Statement on Mental Health Recovery (brochure distributed)
- ⌘ 2006 is the “Year of the Consumer”
- ⌘ The beginning of a national anti-stigma campaign focused on transition-aged clients (between the ages of eighteen and twenty-four)
- ⌘ A national project to include peer supports among recognized evidence-based practices
- ⌘ Recently released training guidelines on seclusion and restraint—from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)
- ⌘ Increased emphasis on consumer-directed mental-health services (“cash and counseling”)
- ⌘ The importance of peer support in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina

Clare Munat added information about a new vet-to-vet group in White River Junction. Moe Armstrong started it.

VSH Futures Update: Frank Reed

The conceptual certificate of need (CON) was filed in August. The response from the Department of Banking, Insurance, Securities, and Health Care Administration (BISHCA) has come in the form of 160 questions, and the Division of Mental Health (DMH) is working on answers to them. See the Health Department Web site for BISHCA's questions as well as postings of meeting times for the various Futures work groups.

DMH Update: Frank Reed

- Paul Blake retired on September 14, 2006
- Jessica Oski has joined the Legal Unit; she will divide her time between the Futures Project and VSH issues
- Budget instructions for Fiscal Year 2008 are out
- Work is proceeding on business continuity plans in case of a disaster (for example, an avian flu pandemic)
- Other projects with which Frank is involved include the Asset Management Inventory and outcome indicators, and the Information Technology work group
- Global Commitment to Health Care: grievance and appeals process at local agencies
- CRT Directors' meeting this Friday: involuntary transportation for psychiatric inpatient hospitalization, housing, and a new possibility for health care/education billing through the Office of Vermont Health Access (OVHA) are all items on the agenda

Possible Agenda Items for October 2

- ☐ Introductions, June 12 minutes, and additions (if any) to the agenda
- ☐ Welcome for visitor from Governing Body: discussion
- ☐ WCMHS: finish discussion of re-designation
- ☐ VSH updates and information for annual report: Terry Rowe
- ☐ Futures report and DMH updates: Frank Reed
- ☐ Update on search for a Deputy Commissioner
- ☐ Agenda for November 13
- ☐ Public comment